

2. (fourth amended) An assay for identifying a substance that inhibits the interaction of an influenza virus nucleoprotein with a host cell protein comprising:
- (a) contacting an influenza virus nucleoprotein or a peptide fragment of the influenza virus nucleoprotein with a host cell protein or a peptide fragment of the host cell protein, under conditions and for a time sufficient to permit the influenza virus nucleoprotein or influenza virus nucleoprotein peptide fragment to bind to and form a complex with the host cell protein or a peptide fragment of the host cell protein, in the presence of a test substance, wherein the peptide fragment of the influenza virus nucleoprotein comprises the binding site of the host cell protein and wherein the peptide fragment of the host cell protein comprises the binding site of the influenza virus nucleoprotein; and
 - (b) detecting the formation of a complex, wherein a decrease in the complex detected as compared to the amount of complex detected in the absence of the substance indicates that a substance that inhibits the interaction between the influenza virus nucleoprotein or influenza virus nucleoprotein peptide fragment and the host cell protein or peptide fragment of the host cell protein is identified.
4. (amended) The assay of Claim 2 in which the host cell protein is NPI-2.
5. (amended) The assay of Claim 2 in which the host cell protein is NPI-3.
6. (amended) The assay of Claim 2 in which the host cell protein is NPI-4.
7. (amended) The assay of Claim 2 in which the host cell protein is NPI-5.
8. (amended) The assay of Claim 2 in which the host cell protein is NPI-6.

11. (amended) The assay of Claim 2 in which the influenza virus nucleoprotein or peptide fragment of the influenza virus nucleoprotein is immobilized on a solid surface.

12. (amended) The assay of Claim 11 in which an immobilized antibody is used to anchor the immobilized influenza virus nucleoprotein or peptide fragment of the influenza virus nucleoprotein.

14. (amended) The assay of Claim 11 in which the influenza virus nucleoprotein or peptide fragment of the influenza virus nucleoprotein is immobilized prior to the reaction so that the reaction is conducted in a solid-liquid phase.

15. (amended) The assay of Claim 2 in which the proteins or peptides are contacted in a liquid phase to form a complex which is separated from the liquid phase at the end of the reaction.

Add new Claims 57-74, as follows:

57. (new) An assay for identifying a substance that inhibits the interaction of an influenza virus nucleoprotein with a host cell protein comprising:

- (a) contacting a fusion protein with a host cell protein or a peptide fragment of the host cell protein comprising the binding site of influenza virus nucleoprotein, under conditions and for a time sufficient to permit the fusion protein to bind to and form a complex with the host cell protein or the peptide fragment of the host cell protein, in the presence of a substance, wherein the fusion protein comprises influenza virus nucleoprotein or a peptide fragment of the influenza virus nucleoprotein comprising the binding site for the host cell protein; and
- (b) detecting the formation of a complex, wherein a decrease in the complex detected as compared to the amount of complex detected in the absence of the substance indicates that a substance that inhibits the interaction between the influenza virus nucleoprotein or influenza virus nucleoprotein peptide

fragment and the host cell protein or peptide fragment of the host cell protein is identified.

58. (new) An assay for identifying a substance that inhibits the interaction of an influenza virus nucleoprotein with a host cell protein comprising:

- (a) contacting a fusion protein with influenza virus nucleoprotein or a peptide fragment of the influenza virus nucleoprotein comprising the binding site of the host cell protein, under conditions and for a time sufficient to permit the fusion protein to bind to and form a complex with the influenza virus nucleoprotein or the peptide fragment of the influenza virus nucleoprotein, in the presence of a substance, wherein the fusion protein comprises the host cell protein or a peptide fragment of the host cell protein comprising the binding site for influenza virus nucleoprotein; and
- (b) detecting the formation of a complex, wherein a decrease in the complex detected as compared to the amount of complex detected in the absence of the substance indicates that a substance that inhibits the interaction between the influenza virus nucleoprotein or influenza virus nucleoprotein peptide fragment and the host cell protein or peptide fragment of the host cell protein is identified.

59. (new) The assay of Claim 2 in which the host cell protein or the peptide fragment of the host cell protein is immobilized on a solid surface.

60. (new) The assay of Claim 59 in which an immobilized antibody is used to anchor the immobilized host cell protein or peptide fragment of the host cell protein.

61. (new) The assay of Claim 59 in which the host cell protein or peptide fragment of the host cell protein is immobilized prior to the reaction so that the reaction is conducted in a solid-liquid phase.

62. (new) The assay of Claim 57 in which the host cell protein or the peptide fragment of the host cell protein is immobilized on a solid surface.

63. (new) The assay of Claim 58 in which the influenza virus nucleoprotein or peptide fragment of the influenza virus nucleoprotein is immobilized on a solid surface.

64. (new) The assay of Claim 2 or 11 in which the host cell protein or peptide fragment of the host cell protein is directly or indirectly labeled.

65. (new) The assay of Claim 2 or 59 in which the influenza virus nucleoprotein or peptide fragment of the influenza virus nucleoprotein is directly or indirectly labeled.

66. (new) The assay of Claim 57 in which the host cell protein or peptide fragment of the host cell protein is directly or indirectly labeled.

67. (new) The assay of Claim 58 in which the influenza virus nucleoprotein or peptide fragment of the influenza virus nucleoprotein is directly or indirectly labeled.

68. (new) The assay of Claim 57, 58, 62 or 63 in which the fusion protein is directly or indirectly labeled.

69. (new) The assay of Claim 57, 58, 66 or 67 in which the fusion protein is immobilized on a solid surface.

70. (new) The assay of Claim 64, wherein the label is a radioisotope, an enzymatic label or a fluorescent label.

71. (new) The assay of Claim 65, wherein the label is a radioisotope, an enzymatic label or a fluorescent label.